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THREE INDIVIDUALS INDICTED IN MORTGAGE FRAUD SCHEME

AUGUSTA: Lisa Godbey Wood, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Georgia, today announced that a federal grand jury sitting in Savannah returned a nineteen (19) count indictment against **STACEY L. SHEFTON**, age 33, **MICHAEL D. DUNN**, age 39, and **WILLIE J. ANDERSON, JR.**, age 37, charging the defendants with various crimes including conspiracy, wire and mail fraud, money laundering, and identity theft. The indictment also includes a forfeiture provision in which the Government seeks to recover certain property from the Defendants.

The indictment alleges that each of the Defendants conspired to defraud mortgage lenders and obtain money from those lenders under false pretenses. Shefton and Anderson are also charged with conducting financial transactions using the proceeds of their illegal activity in order to conceal the source of that money. Additionally, Shefton is charged with using the identification of another person in order to aid his illegal activity.

Specifically, each of the Defendants is charged with conspiring to defraud a mortgage lender by orchestrating a fraudulent purchase and sale of a property in Alpharetta, Georgia by arranging to have individuals come to the office of an Augusta closing attorney and pose as the actual owner and purported buyer of that property. Dunn is also charged with purchasing a property in Harlem, Georgia out of foreclosure, then selling that property at a grossly inflated price to his girlfriend, who

he had supplied with false credit information. Shefton is further charged with falsely representing to prospective home purchasers in Statesboro, Georgia that he had obtained a home loan on their behalf, when in fact he had fraudulently used the identity of another individual to obtain a home loan. The indictment further alleges that Shefton then fraudulently charged them fees for services he had not provided. The acts described in the indictment are alleged to have occurred over a number of years, beginning in April 2000 and continuing until the return of the indictment. The Defendants are charged with defrauding various individuals and entities of over \$300,000. The forfeiture allegation lists certain property that the Government intends to forfeit as a result of the allegations in the indictment, including a 2005 BMW, a 2005 Land Rover, a 2006 Mercedes, and \$300,000 in cash seized when agents executed a search warrant in the case.

If convicted, the defendants face maximum penalties ranging from five to twenty years, fines of up to \$250,000, and up to three years supervised release, along with a \$100 special assessment per count.

Ms. Wood stressed that an indictment is only an accusation, and is not evidence of guilt. The Defendants are entitled to a fair trial, during which it will be the Government's burden to prove their guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The investigation was conducted by Special Agents Anthony Deprizio and Corenelius Harris of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and Special Agent Patricia Donovan of the United States Secret Service. The lead prosecutors representing the Government are Assistant U.S. Attorney Stephen K. Marsh and Assistant U.S. Attorney Jay Weimer.

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